

force winds that forced dog musher Lou Packer and his dogs to be airlifted to safety, and he and his team had to quit the race. He described what I would call life-threatening weather conditions by saying:

We were climbing over this mountain and we got hit by this wind that hit us like a hammer. The temperature dropped—started plummeting—and I lost the trail. And the wind started to build and build, and then the wind got bad, so I climbed in my sled and it was pretty much a survival situation at this point. I threw all the gear out of my sled and climbed in and zipped it up; it was probably 30, 35 below, I have no idea.

These are the types of individuals who train all year long with their dogs to prepare for this incredible race. So it is not just the musher whose success we celebrate but it is these incredible four-legged athletes that are absolutely astounding.

Some of the other mushers out on the trail are pretty extraordinary folks, such as John Baker, out of Nome, Sebastian Schnuelle and Aaron Burmeister. They were describing other conditions along the trail. Schnuelle described it as brutal, but he said:

At times the wind was blowing so hard out of Shaktoolik that his dog team moved sideways.

Well, when you have about 15 or 16 dogs pulling a loaded sled and a musher and you have winds that are blowing you sideways, you know you are in some weather. He commented further:

First we had snow and wind. Now we have wind and wind.

Well, earlier this afternoon, thousands gathered at the famous burlwood arch on Front Street in Nome, AK, to cheer on Lance Mackey as his dogs carried him to victory over his extremely talented and resilient competitors from all over the world. This is an international race, most absolutely. Lance and his team of canines completed the race a little less than 3 hours short of 10 days.

Imagine yourself standing on the back of sled runners going over mountain ranges, going through ice and snow, in temperatures of 30 below and the wind howling at you. And that is fun, ladies and gentlemen. This is man and dog against Mother Nature, and the best teams sure are winning.

Alaskan newspapers tell a story of Lance's fired-up dog team after taking his only 24-hour break during the race. He broke in a town called Takotna. After the layover was completed—you have to rest for 24 hours, mandatory, because sometimes your teams don't want to rest; they want to keep moving. Well, after this layover was completed, Lance's 16 dogs were barking and pulling at their tug lines like they were leaving the race's starting line. Lance said he had this amazing run, and he was going to put the bale of straw out for the dogs to rest. He had every intention of stopping, but then he sees that his dogs are yelping and barking to get going, so he takes off. He said:

They're telling me what to do. So I dumped the straw, and it's been heaven ever since.

What you have here, with this individual musher, Lance Mackey, who cares so deeply for the health and the condition of these four-legged athletes, is a guy who has shown a great mastery of working with and training these canine athletes for the sport of dog mushing. The Anchorage Daily News last year, when he won, stated:

A musher doesn't win four straight 1,000 mile Yukon Quests and two straight Iditarods by making dogs run. He wins by making dogs want to run.

Lance describes working with his dogs this way: He says:

The biggest challenge working with a large team of dogs is the individual personalities. Like a classroom full of kids, all with issues, wants, questions, some barking wildly to get my attention, and then there are some who just do what needs to be done and require only a nod or a smile. Every dog is different. Every need is different. That is what I love. The reward is seeing them all come together as a team working for a common goal. It's just cool.

I had the opportunity last week—when I was up in the State for the ceremonial start of the Iditarod—to go around and talk with the mushers and see all their teams. I had a chance to see Larry, his lead dog. My favorite is Lippy. I just kind of like the name, but Lippy has great little eyebrows. My favorite picture is with Lippy, but these dogs all have personalities unto themselves. And when they do come together as a team to do these incredible athletic feats, we must acknowledge and respect them.

Lance Mackey continues to impress all of us with his remarkable achievements and record-setting performances. He is an inspiration to others who struggle with cancer. He named his dog kennel up north the Lance Mackey's Comeback Kennel. I think that is most appropriate.

So it is my honor today to stand before the Senate to congratulate Lance Mackey and his team of amazing dogs. Lance is a world-class dog musher and a true Alaskan hero, and I wish him and his team continued success and good health in the future.

With that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that tomorrow morning, March 19, following a period of morning business, the Senate proceed to H.R. 146; that upon the bill being reported, there be 20 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled between Senators BINGAMAN and COBURN or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of this time, the Senate proceed

to vote in relation to the amendments as listed below and that the order with respect to time prior to votes and vote sequencing remain in effect: amendment No. 677, No. 682, No. 683; that upon disposition of all amendments, there be 30 minutes of debate with respect to the bill, equally divided and controlled between Senators BINGAMAN and COBURN or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate then proceed as provided for under the order of March 17, with all other provisions remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of H.R. 146, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EARMARKS DEBATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for several months now we have been discussing earmarks or congressionally directed spending. This body has heard many false charges about earmarks. We have heard that earmarks amount to wasteful spending. We have heard that taxpayers should not support these projects. We have even heard that earmarks don't actually benefit our States.

Fortunately, my constituents understand that the rhetoric on earmarks doesn't match the facts.

Nevadans know that these projects are brought to me by their mayors, council members, and city managers. Nevadans know that, as their Senator, I understand their needs better than a faceless bureaucrat in Washington. And most importantly, Nevadans know how valuable earmarks are in a small State like ours to expand medical services, build infrastructure, and provide other services.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the following editorial from Las Vegas Review-Journal columnist John L. Smith. Mr. Smith accurately points out the hypocrisy surrounding the earmarking debate and provides examples of many beneficial earmarks for Nevada.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[From Las Vegas Review-Journal, Mar. 18, 2009]

JOHN L. SMITH: LET'S DO RIGHT-WING THING AND SEND THAT PORK BACK TO WASHINGTON
Here's your chance, Nevada.

This is your golden opportunity to unfurl old "Battle Born" and wave it proudly in the Libertarian breezes.

Come on, all you die-hard conservatives and daffy Obama critics who these days find yourselves chattering endlessly about the evils of pork barrel politics, "earmarks" and government waste in general. Take time out from calling into your favorite radio talk show and register your complaint.

This is the time to demand that your local and state officials return the \$100 million secured by Senate Majority Leader and Silver State Pork Farmer Supreme Harry Reid in the recent \$410 billion federal spending bill. (Meanwhile, Nevada's "hard-core conservative" John Ensign voted against the bill after putting his fingerprints on \$54 million in earmarks. And he didn't even blush.)

Many conservatives have assailed the latest federal shopping spree for being riddled with "earmarks" at a time Congress had supposedly sworn off pork. You can't turn on a television or open a newspaper without running into the criticism.

So here's your chance, Nevada. Demand that your community's portion of the money be returned.

If wicked old Clark County wants to keep its share of the loot, that doesn't preclude the state's rural counties from taking a righteous stand and marking the metaphorical envelopes containing those federal hand-out checks "Return to Sender." Even if it isn't effective, just think how much publicity your town will generate by tossing that federal handout back into Uncle Sam's face.

Of course, criticizing government waste is easy. Rejecting it when it's your turn at the trough is more difficult. A quick perusal of the particulars of Nevada's \$100 million proves this out.

There's \$807,500 for the Nevada Fair Housing Foreclosure Effort, and another \$507,000 for the Access to Healthcare Network for uninsured Nevadans.

Remember the hepatitis C scandal? There's \$523,000 earmarked for the Southern Nevada Health District to fight that battle.

There's nearly \$1 million to assist the University of Nevada Health Sciences System nursing program and \$856,000 each for the Clark County and Washoe County school districts for dropout prevention.

There's more than \$800,000 for University of Nevada, Reno agriculture-related programs, and another \$269,000 to help Carson City battle erosion that followed the 2004 Waterfall Fire.

Come on, Carson. Just say no.

While Clark and Washoe counties receive by far the greatest percentage of federal funding for public safety improvements for everything from training facilities to DNA labs, the city of Fernley in Lyon County is due to get \$300,000 for law enforcement equipment.

While I've never thought much about the need for invasive weed control, there's \$235,000 for those who do at the Nevada Department of Agriculture. Presumably, they'll be controlling invasive weeds somewhere in the middle of Great Basin cattle country.

There's \$4.78 million for the Truckee Meadows Flood Control Project, another \$2.5 million for Truckee Canal Reconstruction. There's more than \$3 million for water treatment at Lake Tahoe and \$18 million for "rural Nevada water infrastructure and water quality projects."

There's money to study wildlife habitat in central Nevada lakes and to restore the Lahontan cutthroat trout population.

Inside town limits, there's \$608,000 to help Wells recover from its earthquake, \$150,000 to restore St. Augustine's Church in Austin, \$475,000 for the Virginia & Truckee Railroad,

\$190,000 for the Amargosa Valley Community Center, \$300,000 for wastewater treatment in Goldfield, \$1.5 million for an interpretive center in Elko, \$285,000 for Truckee Meadows Community College low-income student recruitment, and \$24,000 to help poor schoolchildren in Lincoln County.

One of my serious favorites is \$381,000 for the Nevada Cancer Institute to fund the Hope Coach "mammovan," which will provide cancer screening for women in the state's many rural outposts.

This is a great project, but then I like pork spending.

Don't misunderstand: There's plenty to criticize about earmarks and federal spending. Nevada's list of big government projects made me scratch my head several times.

And there are compelling philosophical arguments to be made against wide-open government checkbooks and big deficits. Frankly, I'll be happy to have that discussion—as soon as lowly, care-worn Nevada finishes getting its share. Until then, I'll refrain from joining the Libertarian chorus.

That's the thing about pork.

It's easy to turn it down until the pig is roasted and the platter is passed to you.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, in a recent column for the Washington Post, "Obama's 'Science' Fiction," Charles Krauthammer exposes President Obama's efforts to destabilize the delicate balance between moral concerns over destroying embryonic stem cells and advancing medical research that can be universally accepted.

President Obama's recent decision to authorize expanded and seemingly unlimited Federal funding for stem cell research eviscerates the delicate balance forged by President Bush by forcing taxpayers to support embryonic creation and destruction. Mr. Krauthammer observed that some may "favor moving that moral line to additionally permit the use of spare fertility clinic embryos," but "President Obama replaced it with no line at all. He pointedly left open the creation of cloned and noncloned sperm-and-egg derived—human embryos solely for the purpose of dismemberment and use for parts." What is most concerning to me, and what Mr. Krauthammer succinctly exposes, is that President Obama's new embryonic stem cell policy is devoid of any ethical standards or guidelines. President Obama's decision makes the federal government the final arbiter in a moral argument that defies many Americans' core beliefs about the creation of life.

I ask unanimous consent that his column be printed in the RECORD and I urge my colleagues to consider his thoughtful views.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 13, 2009]

OBAMA'S 'SCIENCE' FICTION

(By Charles Krauthammer)

Last week, the White House invited me to a signing ceremony overturning the Bush (43) executive order on stem cell research. I assume this was because I have long argued in these columns and during my five years

on the President's Council on Bioethics that, contrary to the Bush policy, federal funding should be extended to research on embryonic stem cell lines derived from discarded embryos in fertility clinics.

I declined to attend. Once you show your face at these things you become a tacit endorser of whatever they spring. My caution was vindicated.

President Bush had restricted federal funding for embryonic stem cell research to cells derived from embryos that had already been destroyed (as of his speech of Aug. 9, 2001). While I favor moving that moral line to additionally permit the use of spare fertility clinic embryos, President Obama replaced it with no line at all. He pointedly left open the creation of cloned—and noncloned sperm-and-egg-derived—human embryos solely for the purpose of dismemberment and use for parts.

I am not religious. I do not believe that personhood is conferred upon conception. But I also do not believe that a human embryo is the moral equivalent of a hangnail and deserves no more respect than an appendix. Moreover, given the protean power of embryonic manipulation, the temptation it presents to science and the well-recorded human propensity for evil even in the pursuit of good, lines must be drawn. I suggested the bright line prohibiting the deliberate creation of human embryos solely for the instrumental purpose of research—a clear violation of the categorical imperative not to make a human life (even if only a potential human life) a means rather than an end.

On this, Obama has nothing to say. He leaves it entirely to the scientists. This is more than moral abdication. It is acquiescence to the mystique of "science" and its inherent moral benevolence. How anyone as sophisticated as Obama can believe this within living memory of Mengele and Tuskegee and the fake (and coercive) South Korean stem cell research is hard to fathom.

That part of the ceremony, watched from the safe distance of my office, made me uneasy. The other part—the ostentatious issuance of a memorandum on "restoring scientific integrity to government decision-making"—would have made me walk out.

Restoring? The implication, of course, is that while Obama is guided solely by science, Bush was driven by dogma, ideology and politics.

What an outrage. Bush's nationally televised stem cell speech was the most morally serious address on medical ethics ever given by an American president. It was so scrupulous in presenting the best case for both his view and the contrary view that until the last few minutes, the listener had no idea where Bush would come out.

Obama's address was morally unserious in the extreme. It was populated, as his didactic discourses always are, with a forest of straw men. Such as his admonition that we must resist the "false choice between sound science and moral values." Yet, exactly 2 minutes and 12 seconds later he went on to declare that he would never open the door to the "use of cloning for human reproduction."

Does he not think that a cloned human would be of extraordinary scientific interest? And yet he banned it.

Is he so obtuse as not to see that he had just made a choice of ethics over science? Yet, unlike Bush, who painstakingly explained the balance of ethical and scientific goods he was trying to achieve, Obama did not even pretend to make the case why some practices are morally permissible and others not.

This is not just intellectual laziness. It is the moral arrogance of a man who continuously dismisses his critics as ideological